

Message Text

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ACTION AGRE-00

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 EB-07 SS-15 (ISO) W
----- 006487 /22
R 141727Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8739
INFO AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS

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DEPARTMENT PASS AGRICULTURE, ATHENS FOR AGATT

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OTRA BU
SUBJECT: VISIT TO BULGARIA OF T. ARMSTRONG, SPECIAL
ADVISOR TO SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE

REF: SOFIA 2617

1. INABILITY OF EMBASSY IN SOFIA TO MAKE EVEN ONE APPOINTMENT APPEARED TO BE RESULT OF THE LACK OF CONTACT BETWEEN EMBASSY AND BULGARIAN OFFICIALS IN THE AGRICULTURAL AREA. THIS IS UNFORTUNATE IN VIEW OF BOTH THE IMPORTANCE OF AGRICULTURE IN THE BULGARIAN ECONOMY AND THE INTEREST OF THE BULGARIANS IN EXPANDING AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION. BESIDE LUKANOV, SPASSOV AND HINOUSKI WE ALSO SUGGESTED MEETINGS WITH MR. IVAN TONEV, MR. MICHAEL MICHAILOV, MR. IVAN PAVLOV OR PROFESSOR NESTOROV. THESE SUGGESTIONS WERE NOT EXCLUSIVE AND WE WOULD HAVE BEEN PLEASED TO MEET WITH OFFICIALS OF THE LIVESTOCK AND MEAT TRADE SIDE OF RODOPA FOR EXAMPLE OR PEOPLE SUCH AS DR. HRISTOV, CHIEF OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE, TECHNICAL PROGRESS AND EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE.

2. IRONICALLY, DR. HRISTOV WE UNDERSTAND IS SHORTLY TO VISIT THE US AND IN THE WEEK PREVIOUS TO OUR VISIT EXPRESSED HIS STRONG DESIRE TO EXPAND TECHNICAL TIES BETWEEN THE US FEED GRAINS COUNCIL, OTHER USDA CO-OPERATORS AND HIS MINISTRY.

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3. IN DISCUSSIONS WITH VARIOUS CONTACTS HERE BEFORE TRIP WE RECEIVED DISTINCT IMPRESSION THAT AGRICULTURAL SUBJECT IN PARTICULAR PROVIDED A COMMON BASE FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH BULGARIANS WHICH COULD OVERCOME DIFFERENCES IN OUTLOOK AND PERCEPTIONS IN OTHER AREAS. AND THE BULGARIANS WERE INTERESTED IN LARGE SCALE BREEDING AND ANIMAL PRODUCTION, AN AREA WHERE ARMSTRONG IS A RECOGNISED EXPERT, WITH YEAR OF PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE.

4. WE HAD HOPED THE VISIT WOULD PROVIDE THE OPPORTUNITY FOR THE EMBASSY TO EXPAND CONTACTS WITH AGRICULTURAL SECTOR LEADERS. WE LEARNED THEREFORE WITH INCREDULITY AND DISAPPOINTMENT THAT APPOINTMENTS COULD NOT BE MADE BY THE EMBASSY. THEY FRANKLY ADMITTED THAT PERSONS WERE PERHAPS BETTER OFF MAKING ARRANGEMENTS DIRECTLY WITH THE BULGARIANS, RATHER THAN THROUGH THE EMBASSY. HAD WE KNOWN OF THE POOR RELATIONS EXISTING IN SOFIA WE WOULD HAVE CO-ORDINATED APPOINTMENTS THROUGH GOOD CONTACTS HERE IN LONDON AND OTHER EC CAPITALS.

ARMSTRONG

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